1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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643 Although the present-day political system of Nupe appears to represent in many respects only a copy and continuation of the pre-Fulani system, the characteristic features of ancient Nupe kingship—the former rule of inheritance, the ritual taboos, and the sacred emblems and form of magic linked with kingship—have disappeared under the Mohammedan Fulani Emirs. But already a new background of religion and myth is forming behind the modern kingship. The memory of the ancestor of the Fulani rulers of Nupe, Mallam Dendo, has become sanctified. The stories of his life and exploits, emphasizing his supernatural faculties, have the flavour of myths. And his tomb at Rabá, over [788] which a mosque has been built, became a place of worship and pilgrimage. At the time of the election of the present Emir, when a number of important political posts were due to change hands, the *Rani*, a Fulani prince anxious to obtain one of these posts, went to Rabá, fasted for seven days, sacrificed in the grave-mosque, and prayed to his ancestor for help.

The disappearance of ancient Nupe kingship reflects the far-reaching historical changes which Nupe kingdom had undergone in the Fulani conquest. In pre-Fulani Nupe the link with magic and myth, ritual rules and taboos, and possibly even the law of succession, separated the king from the rest of the people, even from the members of his own house. Fulani rule, only recently established by undisguised conquest, and dependent upon the co-operation of a band of war-chiefs and faction-leaders, turned semi-sacred kingship into rulership of the strongest. The king becomes a *primus inter pares*, the highest rank-holder in a royal nobility ruled by precedence and promotion. The exclusiveness of primogeniture gave way to a system of succession that allowed for balance of power and could satisfy rival claims. This final balance was not achieved at once. Of the seven sons of Mallam Dendo three only were destined to found royal houses, two directly, Usman Zaki and Masaba, and one in the second generation, Majigi, through his son Umaru. Having once concentrated military and political power in their own hands, these three families eliminated the other sons and grandsons from the succession, paying them off with political offices the importance of which decreased from generation to generation. This resulted in three dynasties which succeed to the throne in strict rotation. In the genealogy given in Appendix II this development is clearly visible. This historical explanation of the present system of kingship is borne out by the views of the people themselves. One of my most enlightened informants, a very learned man and himself a member of the royal nobility, defended the present form of succession against the old primogeniture on these grounds: the old system could work in ancient Nupe, when there was a powerful *kuti* (magic) behind the *Etsu*'s authority. For the Fulani dynasty, which came to power as a large group, composed of jealous relatives and partisans, a divided succession was the only solution. The country too, he added, could only benefit from such balance of power.

643 We may mention here another change from pre-Fulani to Fulani kingship which concerns the political status of the Nupe state. While the 648 Nupe kings were absolute masters in their own country, the Fulani

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
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We cannot precisely measure this psychological aftermath of acts of worship. But we can assess it indirectly, from the concern with religious experiences visible in everyday life. And here it is quite clear that our second assumption is the correct one. For the acts of worship do not leave any vivid awareness of the achieved communion with the deity nor any lasting sense of the holy. There is nothing of 'religiosity' in the Nupe character. He knows, of course, at all times, that there is a God and a realm of the supernatural; but ordinarily this is tacit knowledge, of no practical relevance, neither permanently awe-inspiring nor permanently exhilarating. Crudely speaking, the Nupe are religious only on religious occasions; in between, life is an affair of secular values and rules-of-thumb. That even sacred places are 'sacred' only at certain times of the year is part of the same attitude; so is the absence of any conception of personal holiness. Even Islam, with its daily prayers, its Friday service, and its pious scholars, has hardly affected this attitude. For the daily prayers have become unthinking routine, without any touch of the mystic; being a mallam is a profession among others and often combined with them; and the Moslem cult of saints or 'holy men' found no response.

All this means that the spheres of religion and the profane remain clearly separable. Probably few religions merge completely with secular life so that every possible action bears some reference to transcendental notions. Nor, of course, can we conceive of religions which would at no point coincide with mundane interests. But the border zone between the two can be more or less wide and more or less sharply circumscribed. In Nupe, this zone is narrow and sharply outlined. Wherever the 'competences' of religion bear on mundane interests we can readily mark the point where the coincidence ceases. There is no 'carry-over' from one to the other. Thus religion sustains the offices of chiefs, kings, and other exponents of authority and law: but their person is not sacred, and criminals convicted by these holders of supernaturally sanctioned offices are not treated with any show of awe or sacred horror. Religion helps to bind together the kin group through the belief in reincarnation, through ancestral sacrifices, and through the solemnization of marriage and birth: but the Nupe do not, on normal occasions, speak the names of the ancestors with bated breath or constantly worry about placating their spirits. Marriage is in no sense sacred, and children are not holy; even children whose birth is ascribed to the efficacy of sacrifice are not treated in any special way.[1] Nor, finally, are the sick who recover with supernatural aid or the crops that thrive after some rite has been duly

[1] The only rules of this kind are entailed in the *sogba* cult, of alien origin.